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ABSTRACT

The policy of the Framingham School System with respect to drug use and abuse is to establish a climate within its schools that is conducive to the understanding and respect for the proper use of drugs and an attitude toward nonabuse of drugs. To achieve this climate, some basic measures described in this report were taken. One measure was to set up effective counseling programs for students and a continuing program of instruction on the nature of drugs and their use or abuse. The school system also developed opportunities for parents and other citizens to understand the schools' approach to the understanding and elimination of drug abuse. Cooperative programs with other local, State, and national agencies with respect to determination of the basic causes of drug ause were inaugurated; and procedures and guidelines to eliminate opportunities for the sale or distribution of drugs were developed. (Author/JF)

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DRUG POLICY
OF THE
FRAMINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADOPTED APRIL 10, 1973

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POLICY: The Use and Abuse of Drugs Within The Framingham Public Schools

The policy of the Framingham School System with respect to drug use and abuse is to establish a climate within its schools that is conducive to the understanding and respect for the proper use of drugs and an attitude toward non-abuse of drugs. The climate is achieved through the establishment of:

1. Effective counseling programs for students and continuing programs of instruction on the nature of drugs and their proper use, the deleterious effects of drug abuse on the mental, physiological, social, economic, and legal status of the individual, and the development of proper attitudes and values toward this cultural phenomenon.

2. Opportunities for parents and other citizens to understand the schools' approach to elimination and understanding of drug abuse and to receive qualified instruction about drugs and drug abuse.

3. Cooperative programs with other local, state, and national agencies with respect to determination of the basic causes of drug abuse, educational program effectiveness, treatment, and rehabilitation of users and law enforcement.

4. Procedures and guidelines to eliminate opportunities for the sale, or distribution of drugs.

The Framingham Public Schools will seek the resources necessary to accomplish these objectives.

PHILOSPHY: Educational Programs

The schools are uniquely qualified to work with young people against drug abuse through educational and counseling programs. The schools have an obligation to help each student develop a positive self-concept, a respect for his physical being, and an insight into the importance of his health to his full self-realization.

Every effort will be made by teachers and counselors to create an atmosphere of knowledge, confidence, and trust that will encourage young people to seek help in overcoming problems involving drug use.

The active involvement of students is essential to the schools' efforts to deal with drug abuse. Students will have the opportunity and responsibility for participation in the development, implementation, and evaluation of courses and programs in drug abuse education and control.

On a continuing basis, there is being built into the total curriculum, kindergarten through grade 8, planned provisions for content on the nature of drugs and the dangers involved in their abuse and attitudinal and value-oriented approaches to drug prevention with specific provisions for relating these topics to relevant courses of study. In the 9-12 curriculum, approaches to drug education should be integrated into the total spectrum of academic work as much as possible in addition to designed curricular experiences.

In-service programs will be provided to enhance staff awareness of the scope of the drug problem as related to our schools, community, and society; to provide knowledge of scientific and medical findings concerning drugs, knowledge of laws relating to drug abuse, and legal penalties for violation of the law; and to familiarize teachers with available educational resources. Those who will work in specific drug education areas will be trained for that responsibility.

In view of the complexity of scientific knowledge about the causes of drug abuse, the educational program will be subject to modifications as additional data and more effective teaching techniques become available.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS AND OTHER CITIZENS

The basic causes of drug abuse are related to attitudes of the user, broad social problems, and life values. Establishing an educational and social climate that will remove or modify the root causes for using drugs is a responsibility shared by the school system, parents, and citizens. The primary objective of this program will be to achieve total cooperation with the home and community in combating drug abuse.

The school system will make every effort to inform parents and other citizens of its approach to the elimination of drug abuse and also provide opportunities for adults to receive qualified instruction about drugs and drug abuse.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Drug abuse is of direct concern to many agencies of government and other public and private institutions. The school system will cooperate with these agencies and with private and parochial schools to encourage educational programs related to drug abuse.

Although there is no doubt that there are potentially debilitating effects on the individual who uses drugs, and to his associates, the scientific community does not agree on the specific levels of risk. Elimination of the sources of illegal drugs, detection and treatment of drug abuse, and effective law endorcement require the cooperation of many agencies and branches of government.

The school system will take the initiative to assure that it has the available scientific data and research results relating to the basic causes of drug abuse and that it knows the effects of educational programs in other schools and agencies. The school system will maintain liaison with rehabilitation, treatment, judicial, law enforcement, and legislative agencies to help assure that the total community capability is brought to bear on the elimination of the drug abuse problem.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The school has an obligation to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in the maintenance of existing law.

The law regarding possession and distribution of drugs is clear, and penalties are provided for conviction of violators. Members of the school community are subject to these laws on school grounds as well as off, and school personnel have the same responsibility as every other citizen to uphold the law. The sale or distribution of drugs, narcotics and alcohol on school property is not only a criminal offense but also a school offense and will be treated as such, subject to disciplinary procedures as outlined by this policy, suspension policy, and individual school policy. All incidents concerning drugs on school grounds will be reported to the principal. If the principal determines that the law has been violated or the safety of the school and/or the other students impaired, he will report this to the parents or guardian of the student and to appropriate law enforcement authorities, and he shall determine appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with school policy.

The schools are responsible for maintaining an environment that precludes the introduction of illegal activities by unscrupulous persons who would use a school for access to a large number of young, inquisitive, energetic people. The community rightfully expects the schools to exercise this responsibility.

The school principal must, of necessity, play the major role in each specific case of student drug involvement which is brought to his or her attention. The principal will, however, always depend on the consultation, advice, and cooperation of his or her entire school staff, who may have knowledge of the student, as well as guidance staff and school medical personnel. The teacher is the agent of the administration in the school's attempt to prevent drug abuse and to maintain a positive environment surrounding all

aspects of the problem. He has a responsibility, then, to report any school offenses to the principal or his designate. If the offense is drug-related (selling, distributing, possession, etc.), the teacher is expected to play no different role than would be necessary in any other disciplinary situation. In any case, the teacher has legal protection under Chapter 41, Section 100C of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

A medical/health approach will be the first step in the school's attempt to assist the student involved in the use of drugs. Disciplinary action of any sort will be a secondary measure.

Guidelines for handling the user, the abuser, and the distributor of drugs are attached to this policy. This policy shall be reviewed each year subsequent to its acceptance by the School Committee.

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY

THE USE AND/OR ABUSE OF DRUGS*

1. Drug use and/or abuse is a phenomenon which may or may not act as a deterrent to a student's ordinary personal and educational makeup and growth. The school understands that its primary involvement must be student-oriented and so recognizes its obligation to react when outside pressure and involvement seriously affect the well being of any student. When general counseling is provided on the secondary level, its basic influence should be found in educational policy and philosophy.
2. In any dealings with a drug user and/or abuser, the personal well-being of the individual should be the prime consideration.
3. The school shall not, at any time, attempt to usurp the authority of the parent. It should be the intent of the school to involve the parent, if possible, at every level of the problem.

When a student approaches a staff member with a drug or drug-related problem and requests confidentiality, the staff member must make an individual judgment as to how much assistance he may be able to render and should inform the student of the same. It is suggested that the staff member maintain this confidence and trust until such time as he is unable to assist the student at which point he should refer, with the student's knowledge, the case to the appropriate person.

It should be noted that Massachusetts law does not accord any privilege

** For the purpose, the term "use" refers to the taking of drugs to the extent that there is a dependency or addictive factor involved, no matter how minor; the term "abuser" refers to using of drugs on a random, inconsistent, sometimes experimental basis.*

o the confidential communications that are made between students and members of the faculty or the school administration. Under present law, teachers, counselors, and administrators are subject to subpoena to testify concerning any contacts or communication with any students.

4. When a staff member suspects a student's drug use and/or abuse to be a deterrent to the educational standards of the school and the individual, he should, without accusation, bring this fact to the attention of either the school principal, the drug counselor or a guidance counselor. The recipient should follow up this information quietly and, along with the principal and other necessary professionals, determine a course of action in the best interests of the student.
5. Within the school system the name of any known drug user and/or abuser should be treated confidentially but, at the same time, should be given to professionals (counselors, teachers, administrators) who might deal with the student. This will serve to unite those who have influence on the student.
6. Drug abuse should be treated as a mental and/or physical illness, not necessarily as a reason for discipline.
7. It is the policy of the school to deal with a drug user or abuser only when an incident involving the student is brought to the attention of school personnel. Drug abuse rehabilitation is a long process which is not served by harassment and accusation.
8. When a staff member suspects a student of being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol) during the school day or on school property, he should notify a counselor and/or the principal immediately. Confirmation should be sought by the counselor (drug, crisis, etc.) with the help of the medical staff or other professionals, if necessary.

If the student is powerless to function normally, his parents should be notified to remove him from the premises for health reasons. If an

emergency situation exists, and the parents are unable to be reached, the principal shall take immediate measures for the student's safety (ambulance, hospital, etc.). If the incident is repeated, a thorough search should be made to determine the reasons by staff professionals. Ref. Sec. 56 Chapter 71 Mass. State Laws.

If the student is under the influence of drugs yet able to function, the principal and/or drug counselor shall determine a course of action that reflects the best interests of the student.

Repetitive drug abuse during the school day would indicate the need for assistance beyond that afforded by the school, and that action shall be taken by the principal with the assistance of the professional staff.

The school shall not, at any time, attempt to usurp the authority of the parent. It should be the intent of the school to involve the parent, if possible, at every level of the problem.

9. The drug counselor will act as a referral service and as an agent for alternate solution in all cases.
10. The student shall be actively involved in all action concerning his particular case.
11. If the case warrants administrative action, a student will be given a medical leave of absence during which time he will not incur suspension. Readmittance will be based on either a psychiatric or medical evaluation or both as requested by the principal.
12. When a student submits himself voluntarily for counseling, the drug counselor will provide this service, looking at all times to involve the family in the rehabilitation of the student.

THE SELLING, DISTRIBUTION OR POSSESSION OF DRUGS

1. The selling, distribution, or possession of drugs, narcotics, or alcohol on school property is both a criminal and a school offense and, therefore, is subject to legal prosecution and school disciplinary procedure.
2. Each case involving the sale, distribution, or possession of drugs shall be treated individually and without benefit of absolute precedent.
3. Whenever the principal or his designate has reliable information that drugs are being sold or distributed, or are in the possession of a student, or have been sold, distributed, or were in the possession of a student on school grounds, the principal or his designate shall make an investigation to ascertain all pertinent facts. On the basis of the information obtained, the principal or his designate shall, consistent with the policy and procedures, determine an appropriate course of action. When the principal determines that information has been substantiated, law enforcement authorities shall be called; the appropriate information shall be imparted to them, and any subsequent investigation shall be placed in their hands. At the same time the principal shall contact the parents and arrange for a conference with the student and his parents.
4. Upon determination of his procedure in the individual case, the principal has the right to invoke interim suspension of the student, and a meeting with student, parents, and appropriate officials should be convened as soon as possible. Drug dealing should not be treated in an isolated manner but as behavior disastrous to safety, discipline, and morals.
5. All proceedings dealing with a student known to have sold, distributed, or possessed drugs, narcotics, or alcohol shall be aimed toward rehabilitation. School officials should not feel required to initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student merely on the grounds that he previously has been

found guilty of violating the drug laws. School disciplinary proceedings in such cases should be considered only where the student's conduct disrupts the educational process or interferes with the rights of other persons in the school.

6. Exclusion or expulsion may only be recommended by the School Committee which also shall act as a Board of Appeals for the student.

7. Whenever the principal has information that persons who are not students in the school have sold or transferred drugs to any student, or have sold or transferred drugs on the school grounds, the principal shall take steps promptly to notify police officials. School authorities shall cooperate fully with the police officials in order to apprehend and prosecute such persons.